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### **PSC BEGINS ENFORCEMENT ACTION AGAINST BUZZ TELECOM**

The state Public Service Commission this week issued a complaint against Buzz Telecom and its billing agents in which the PSC alleges Buzz Telecom switched the long distance carriers of numerous elderly Montanans without their valid authorizations or billed unauthorized charges on their telephone bills.

In addition, the PSC contends that Buzz Telecom's telemarketers illegally misrepresented themselves as agents of the consumers' local telephone company.

Consumers who have contacted the PSC about Buzz Telecom complain that Buzz telemarketers have called them to sell a "super saver" long distance discount for senior citizens that the telemarketer says is a new long distance plan being offered. However, consumers who agree to the plan have their long distance carriers switched to Buzz Telecom. According to complaints received by the PSC, Buzz Telecom's initial bills to consumers range from about \$30 to \$40.

Under Montana law, if the PSC finds, after a hearing, that Buzz Telecom placed charges for unauthorized services on a consumer's phone bill, or switched their long distance carrier without authorization, then the PSC may fine the company up to \$1,000 per incident. In addition, the PSC may revoke the Montana service and billing provider registrations of Buzz Telecom and its billing agents, Zero Plus Dialing and USBI.

The PSC alerts consumers who have been contacted by Buzz Telecom to check their telephone bills for unauthorized charges. Consumers may call the PSC for further information or assistance at 1-800-646-6150.

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